Agenda
City Council Workshop Meeting
Tuesday, October 22, 2024
Richland City Hall ~ Council Chambers
625 Swift Boulevard

City Council Workshop - 6:00 p.m.

Agenda Items:

1. 2025 Legislative Priorities: Discussion with State and Federal Elected Officials
   - Joe Schiessl, Deputy City Manager

Future Workshop Agenda Items:

Adjournment

This meeting will be broadcast live on CityView Channel 192 on the City's website and on the City's YouTube Channel.

Richland City Hall is ADA accessible. Requests for sign interpreters, audio equipment, and/or other special services must be received 48 hours prior to the meeting by calling the City Clerk's Office at 509-942-7389.

COUNCIL WORKSHOP COVERSHEET

Council Date: 10/22/2024

Department: Deputy City Manager

Strategic Priority 1 - High Performance Government

Subject:
2025 Legislative Priorities: Discussion with State and Federal Elected Officials

Summary:
The City has engaged contracted lobbyist Mr. David Arbaugh to assist in the development of the City's 2025 state legislative priorities.The attached 2025 legislative priorities were approved by Council via Resolution No. 2024-135 at the October 1, 2024 City Council regular meeting. Richland's local state elected delegation will join the Council and Mr. Arbaugh for the workshop discussion. The 2025 legislative session will begin on January 13, 2025 and will end on April 27, 2025.

Attachments:
1. City of Richland 2025 Legislative Priorities

CITY OF
RICHLAND
WASHINGTON

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES 2025

The City of Richland is a hub for technology and innovation as well as a high quality of life. Richland is working with state partners on the following items for the 2024 legislative session.

Targeted Urban Area Amendment:

The legislature authorized targeted urban areas in 2022 allowing certain tax exemption for qualifying new businesses that create new jobs. The timeline for construction of the new businesses does not presently accommodate heavily regulated industries or complex projects. Increasing this construction timeline would qualify several known and anticipated nuclear, hydrogen, and other complex projects in support of the City of Richland's Strategic Plan for the Northwest Advanced Clean Energy Park.

Capital Budget Funding:

Public Safety Communication System Infrastructure Upgrades for Benton and Franklin Counties:

This project will replace failing analog radio infrastructure and transition law enforcement, fire and EMS agencies in both counties, as well as a portion of Walla Walla County, to a single, P25 compliant, digital communications platform.

SR-240/Aaron Drive Complete Streets Improvements Project:

This project will improve safety and mobility by making needed changes to a 40-year-old traffic design. The Benton-Franklin Council of Governments has named this project a top priority of their congestion management plan. In addition, Washington State Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration have each approved this project.

Island View to Vista Field Trail System:

State funding can assist with a major component of the Island View to Vista Field Trail System which connects streets in Richland, Kennewick, and Benton County. This plan was adopted in 2021 by the cities of Richland and Kennewick and the Benton-Franklin Council of Governments.

Yakima Delta Habitat Restoration Project:

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's project seeks adequate funding to address the multi-agency effort to eliminate the causeway to the Island. Removal of the causeway is intended to improve water quality in the mouth of the Yakima River. The project will have impacts affecting the Citizens of the City of Richland that should be mitigated as elements of the project.

RCW 10.101.030 Public Defense Standards:

Richland endorses a regional solution to address a required reduction in misdemeanor caseloads for public defenders. This change, effective in July 2025, will significantly increase the number of public defenders required to prosecute crime occurring in the City of Richland. The cost to the City of Richland will be unsustainable. Richland requests legislative assistance to address the unfunded mandate.

Housing Choice & Regional Housing Collaboration:

Richland supports legislation that encourages and facilitates access to housing through policies leading to increases in inventory and preservation of the current housing supply to serve a wide range of incomes and needs. Richland recognizes that housing is a regional issue and encourages the region to work collaboratively.

Clean Energy Generation and Effective Energy Transmission:

Richland supports clean, affordable, and reliable electricity supply. Most of the power serving Richland originates from the Bonneville Power Administration which markets federal power including that generated by the four lower Snake River dams. Richland strongly supports retaining these critical baseline energy resources as the state advances its carbon emission objectives. Richland also supports nuclear power generation and affiliated fuel refinement, fuel assembly, and advanced manufacturing in support of the clean energy business sector. Richland will advocate for new transmission capacity through electric transmission corridors and conductor modernization to deliver clean energy benefiting the citizens of Richland and our industries.

The City will support the efforts of other state and local organizations on issues consistent with City positions. These include efforts of the Tri- City Development Council (TRIDEC), Visit Tri-Cities Visitor and Convention Bureau (TCVCB), The Port of Benton, The Port of Kennewick, The Washington Economic Development Association (WEDA), and the Association of Washington Cities (AWC).